

STATE OF MAINE
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

Docket No. 2002-465

August 22, 2002

Consumers Maine Water Company
Application for Approval of Issue
Of Securities (§ 902; §1101)(\$600,000)

ORDER

WELCH, Chairman; NUGENT and DIAMOND, Commissioners

On August 7, 2002, Consumers Maine Water Company (Consumers) filed with the Commission its application for authority to issue its Series M first mortgage bonds in a sum not to exceed \$600,000 through the Maine Municipal Bond Bank under the Maine State Revolving Loan Fund Program, at an annual rate not to exceed 4 percent. The debt will be paid over a term not to exceed 20 years. Due to the fact that these transactions involve the issuance of first mortgage bonds, the Company also requires our approval to mortgage utility property pursuant to M.R.S.A. 35-A §1101. This Order approves the Company's request.

Consumers requires these funds to fund improvements to the filtration plant in its Skowhegan Division (\$185,400) and to fund distribution main replacement in its Kezar Falls Division (\$365,650).

35-A MRSA §6102, Filing with the commission plans for construction or improvements of water systems, requires:

Any water utility, before commencing construction of a new water system or a major addition to or alteration of an existing water system, shall file with the commission, in accordance with the commission's rules, plans and specifications for the construction, additions or alteration in order to obtain the advice of the commission as to cost, method of financing and adherence to proper engineering standards.

Chapter 63, of the Commission's rules defines major construction projects as any new water system or any addition or alteration of an existing water system that is estimated to cost in excess of 5% of the utility's fixed capital investment or \$1,000,000; whichever is smaller. The cost of each project exceeds 5% of the fixed capital investment for the

division where the investment is being made¹. Therefore, Consumers must file its plans and specification for construction with the Commission for each project.

Pursuant to an Amended Delegation Order dated January 9, 1996 in Docket No. 93-169, the Commission delegated to the Director of Finance its authority under 35-A M.R.S.A., Chapter 9, and 11, to approve water utility financing applications, including those that involve mortgaging utility property, for Maine Municipal Bond Bank, Rural Economic & Community Development Administration and their successors. This delegation in no way limits the Commission's authority to review the decision of the Director of Finance pursuant thereto or to directly consider requests for variations. The Director of Finance's approval shall be in the form of an Order, copies of which shall be maintained in the files of the office of the Administrative Director.

Having reviewed the application of the District, together with data filed in support of it, it is the opinion of the Commission that the proceeds of the issuance of the bond are required in good faith for the purposes enumerated in 35-A M.R.S.A. § 901 and § 1101. In approving this securities issue, consistent with normal practice and pursuant to §902 (4), the Commission does not imply approval of the District's capital needs or capitalization ratio for ratemaking purposes, nor does this Order limit or restrict the powers of the Commission in determining or fixing any rate.

Accordingly, pursuant to the Amended Delegation Order dated January 9, 1996, in Docket No. 93-169, I

O R D E R

1. That Consumers Maine Water is hereby authorized to issue its Series M bond in a sum not to exceed \$600,000 to be used solely for the purposes described in this Order, and at a rate not to exceed 4 percent per year through the Maine Municipal Bond Bank under the Maine State Revolving Loan Fund Program for a term not to exceed 20 years.
2. That the District file its construction plans and specifications with the Commission in accordance with Chapter 63 of its rules as the project's estimated cost exceeds 5% of the individual Division's fixed capital investment.
3. That the District report to the Commission, in writing its doings pursuant to this Order within sixty (60) days of the date of the issue of the proposed bond, or November 29, 2002, whichever may come first.
4. That a copy of this Order be mailed to interested parties and this Docket be closed.

¹ In its January 12, 1999 Order Approving Stipulation in Docket No. 98-648, the Commission noted the stipulations provided that each CMWC division will continue to be regulated by the Commission on a stand alone basis. As such, Consumers should look to each division's individual fixed capital investment to determine whether it is necessary to file plans with the Commission.

Dated at Augusta, Maine, this 22nd day of August, 2002.

BY ORDER OF THE ACTING DIRECTOR
OF FINANCE

Richard Kania
Acting Director of Finance

NOTICE OF RIGHTS TO REVIEW OR APPEAL

5 M.R.S.A. § 9061 requires the Public Utilities Commission to give each party to an adjudicatory proceeding written notice of the party's rights to review or appeal of its decision made at the conclusion of the adjudicatory proceeding. The methods of review or appeal of PUC decisions at the conclusion of an adjudicatory proceeding are as follows:

1. Reconsideration of the Commission's Order may be requested under Section 1004 of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure (65-407 C.M.R.110) within 20 days of the date of the Order by filing a petition with the Commission stating the grounds upon which reconsideration is sought.
2. Appeal of a final decision of the Commission may be taken to the Law Court by filing, within 21 days of the date of the Order, a Notice of Appeal with the Administrative Director of the Commission, pursuant to 35-A M.R.S.A. § 1320(1)-(4) and the Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure.
3. Additional court review of constitutional issues or issues involving the justness or reasonableness of rates may be had by the filing of an appeal with the Law Court, pursuant to 35-A M.R.S.A. § 1320(5).

Note: The attachment of this Notice to a document does not indicate the Commission's view that the particular document may be subject to review or appeal. Similarly, the failure of the Commission to attach a copy of this Notice to a document does not indicate the Commission's view that the document is not subject to review or appeal.